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Viewing cable 09ASUNCION695, PARAGUAY UNLIKELY TO APPROVE VENEZUELA'S MERCOSUR

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#09ASUNCION695**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09ASUNCION695	2009-12-29 16:55	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Asuncion

Appears in these articles:

[www.abc.com.py/nota/ni-si-se-viste-de-papa-noel-chavez-ingresara-al-mercosur](#)

VZCZCXYZ0000
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHAC #0695 3631655
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O R 291655Z DEC 09
FM AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0342
INFO MERCOSUR COLLECTIVE
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS

id: 241955
date: 12/29/2009 16:55
refid: 09ASUNCION695
origin: Embassy Asuncion
classification: CONFIDENTIAL
destination: 09ASUNCION681 | 09ASUNCION97 | 09BRASILIA1476
header:
VZCZCXYZ0000
OO RUEHWEB
DE RUEHAC #0695 3631655
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O R 291655Z DEC 09
FM AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0342
INFO MERCOSUR COLLECTIVE

RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS

----- header ends -----

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASUNCION 000695

SIPDIS

WHA/FO CMCMULLEN, WHA/BSC MDRUCKER, BFRIEDMAN, MDASCHBACH

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2034/12/29

TAGS: [PREL](#) [EINT](#) [ECIN](#) [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [PA](#) [VE](#)

SUBJECT: PARAGUAY UNLIKELY TO APPROVE VENEZUELA'S MERCOSUR
APPLICATION

REF: A. ASUNCION 97; B. BRASILIA 1476; C. ASUNCION 681

CLASSIFIED BY: Perry L. Holloway, Charge de Affairs; REASON: 1.4(B),
(D)

[¶1.](#) (U) Despite President Fernando Lugo's strong political support in favor of Venezuela's entry into Mercosur (ref A), Paraguay's Congress, the population in general, and leading daily newspaper ABC Color remain opposed to the measure. While Lugo asked Congress to approve Venezuela's admission in October 2008, he withdrew the measure from Congress August 13 to avoid imminent rejection. Lugo has yet to resubmit the measure to Congress for consideration. After the Brazilian Congress approved Venezuela's entry December 15 (ref B), public debate resumed in Paraguay - the last holdout among the four-nation block.

[¶2.](#) (U) The Colorado Party (ANR) opposes Venezuelan entry, citing Venezuela's violation of Mercosur's democratic charter clause under President Hugo Chavez. Also in opposition are the National Union of Ethical Citizens (UNACE) and the Beloved Fatherland Party (PPQ). These three parties collectively hold sufficient Senate seats to block Venezuelan admission should Lugo force a vote. Faced with a clear lack of votes, the small, leftist Tekojoja Popular Party called December 26 for a public referendum to build pressure on Congress. However, a referendum is opposed as unconstitutional even by some Authentic Radical Liberal Party (PLRA) senators who might be willing to vote in favor of Venezuelan membership.

[¶3.](#) (C) ABC Color routinely runs stories critical of Venezuela and is a strong voice against Venezuelan entry. Another leading newspaper published a poll December 29 showing 52% of voters who live in Asuncion and the Central Region are opposed to letting Venezuela join Mercosur, with only 29% in favor. Privately, the Paraguayan Foreign Minister Hector Lacognata concedes that approval for Venezuelan admission into Mercosur "won't happen here even if Chavez dresses up like Santa Claus" (ref C).

[¶4.](#) (C) COMMENT: Venezuela is a political hot potato in Paraguay, with President Lugo taking lumps from the press every time he does anything remotely pro-Chavez. Firm opposition from the ANR, UNACE, and PPQ, coupled with some PLRA members who are hesitant to cast a vote in support of Chavez, means Paraguay is unlikely to approve Venezuela's entry into Mercosur. However, Venezuela is rumored to be increasing its lobbying efforts to sway - or buy - votes one-by-one. END COMMENT.

HOLLOWAY

=====CABLE ENDS=====